

## Hooker's Reasonableness.

divine revelation as Cartwright, hardly scored on this point. He answers that Church polity is not necessarily a matter of special divine regulation. He finds, indeed, episcopacy and not presbytery in the New Testament; but even if episcopacy were not an apostolical institution, subsequent practice is a sufficient warrant for its existence. This was not good theological reasoning from the standpoint of an all-sufficient revelation, but it is very reasonable, and in the matter of reasonableness Hooker has it far and away over the Puritan dogmatist, who would prescribe a black gown instead of a white surplice in virtue of Scripture. He should have added, however, that if Church polity was a question of reason and not of revelation, it was not reasonable to persecute dissidents, in the intolerant spirit of the Court of High Commission, for mere nonconformity to an Act of Parliament which made the sovereign the supreme arbiter in matters ecclesiastical. His reasonableness was, nevertheless, not palatable to the more intolerant members of the anti-Puritan party, and already Dr Bancroft is found proclaiming in the true theological spirit the divine right of bishops in opposition to the divine right of presbyters. His reasonableness thus by no means settled the matter to the satisfaction of the strictly theological minds *pro* and *contra*. It only aggravated contention on both sides, and this contention took a political trend, which invested it with momentous consequences during the new century about to open. The divine right of bishops went to support the divine right of kings ; the divine right of presbyters was compatible with the rights of the people, and tended to nurture opposition to arbitrary kings. England, at the end of Elizabeth's reign, had not heard the last word in the controversy.

Hooker's genius did not earn him high preferment. Whit-gift had better fortune, though his performance is far below the level of the "Ecclesiastical Polity." Elizabeth made him Dean of Lincoln, and showed her growing aversion for his antagonists by accentuating their persecution. In October 1573 she issued a proclamation rebuking the slackness of the bishops and ordering them to put down all nonconformist meetings, and severely punish all nonconformist preachers, "on pain of her majesty's high displeasure for their negligence